RAWHIDE KID

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MARVEL COMICS GROUP

RAWHIDE KID

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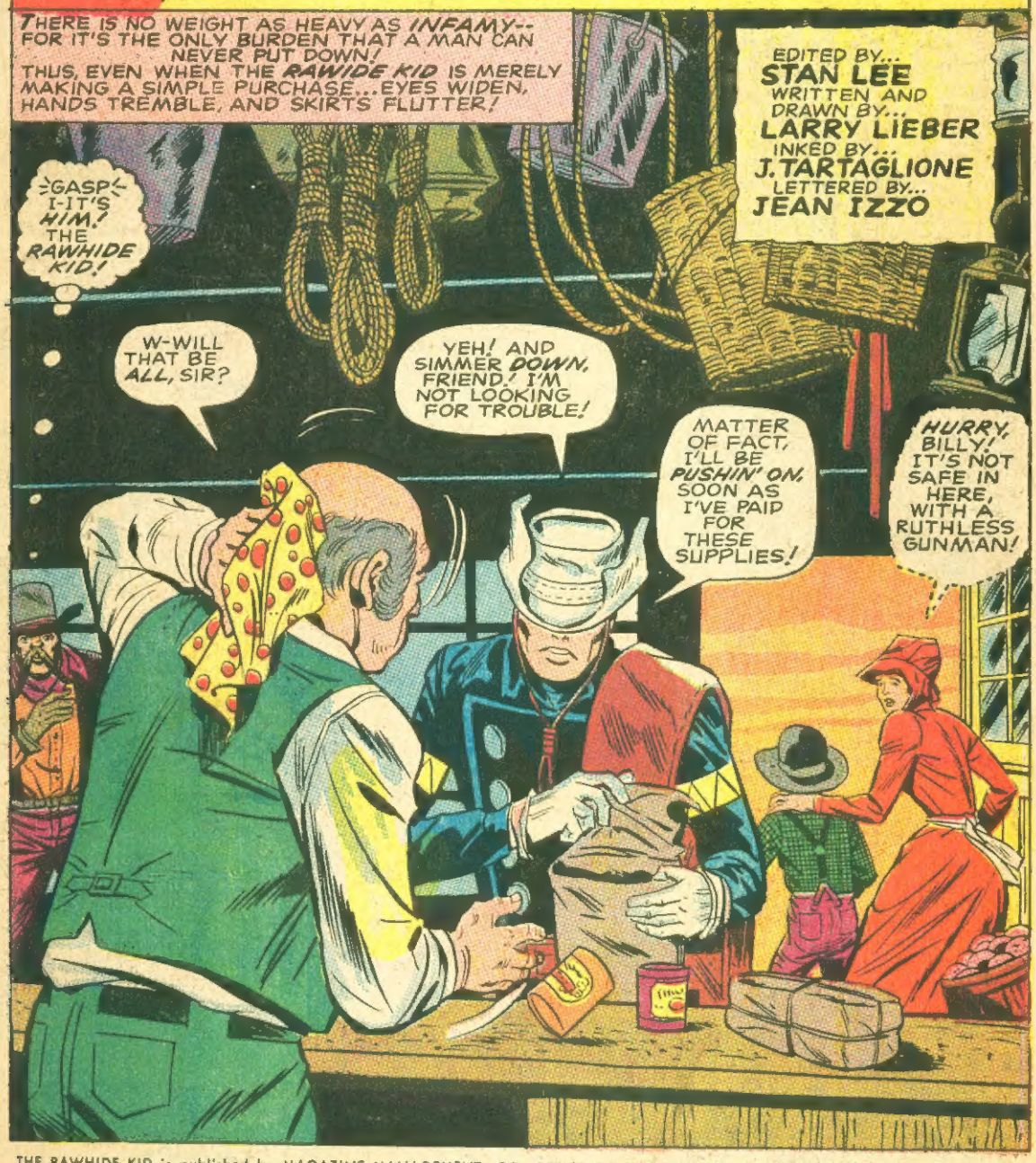
AND NOW -- THE EXECUTIONER!

RAW-HIDE KID

"AND NOW-- THE EXECUTIONER!"



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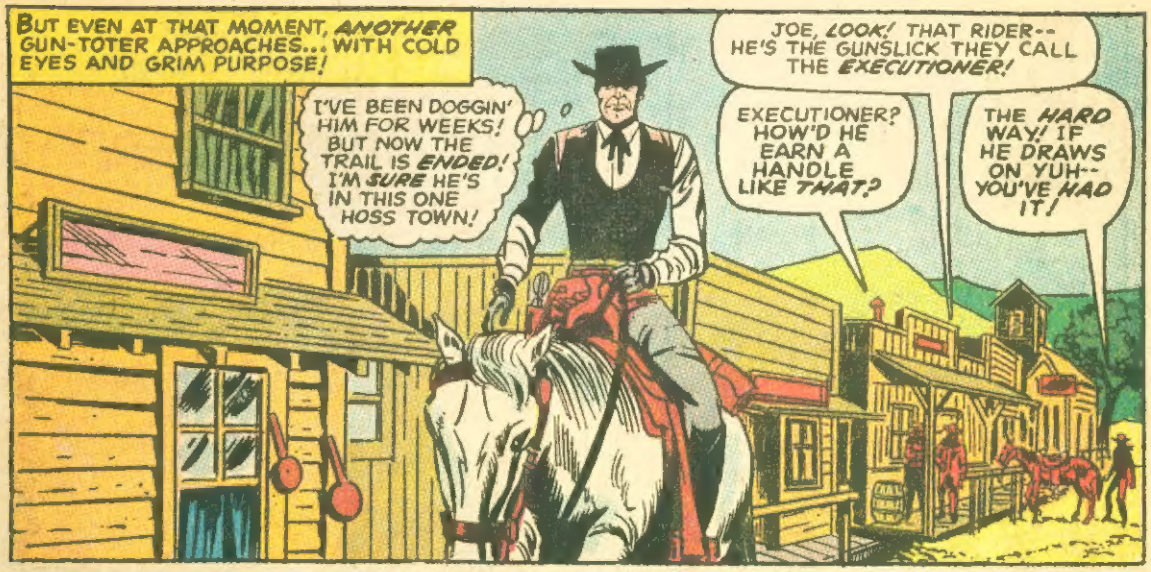
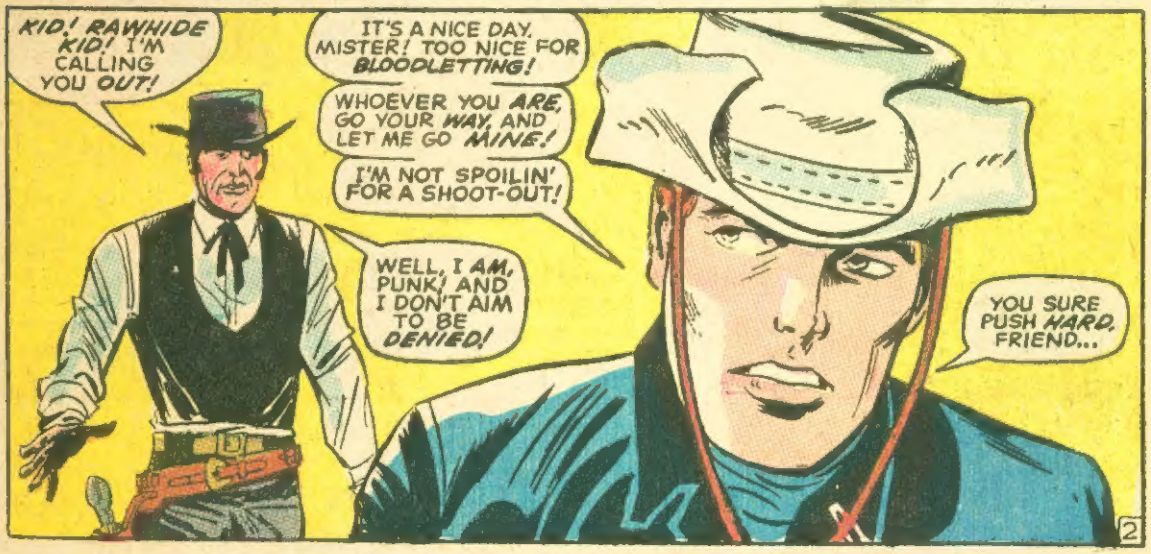
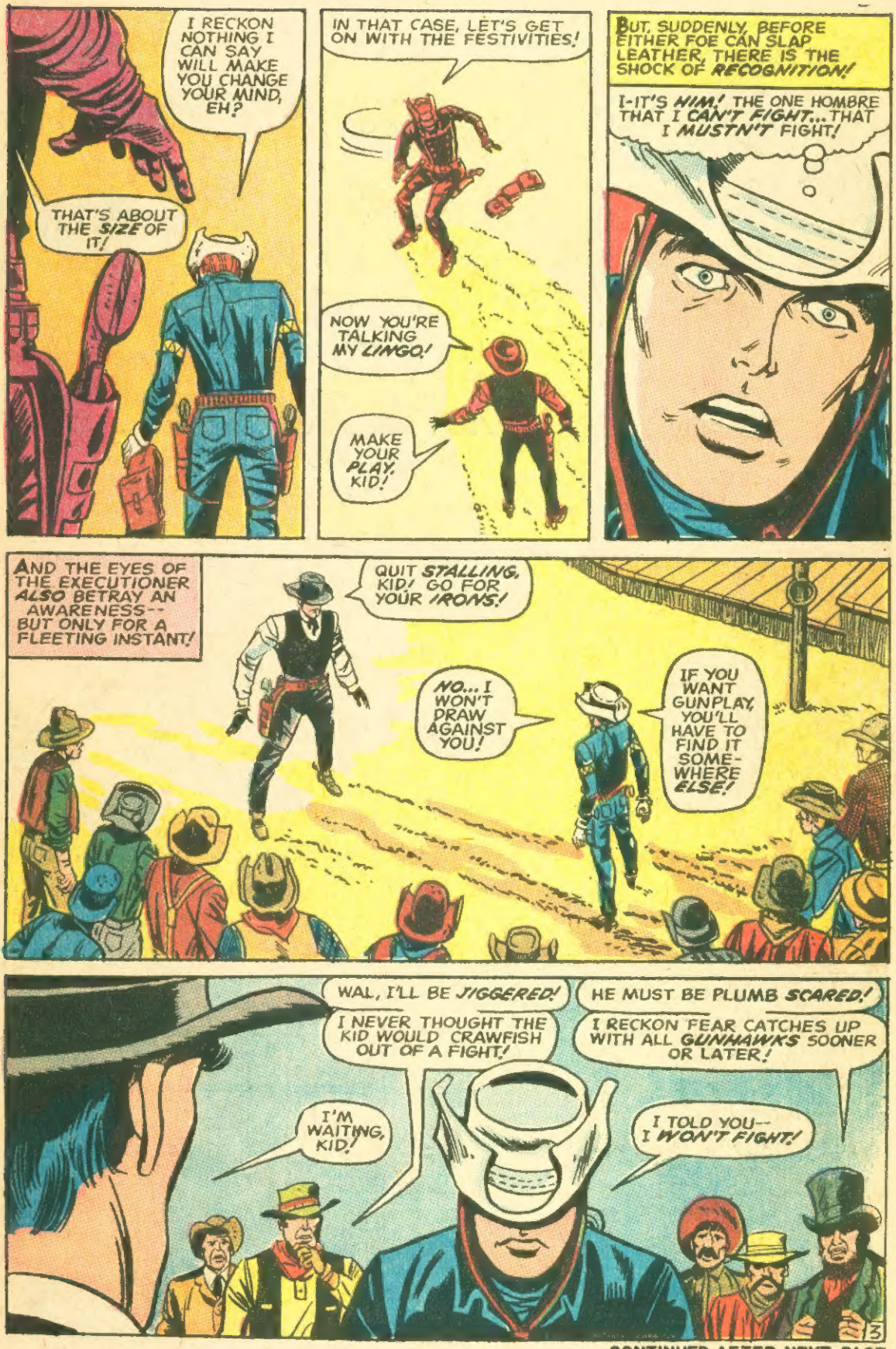

BUT EVEN AT THAT MOMENT, ANOTHER GUN-TOTER APPROACHES... WITH COLD EYES AND GRIM PURPOSE!
I'VE BEEN DOGGIN' HIM FOR WEEKS! BUT NOW THE TRAIL IS ENDED! I'M SURE HE'S IN THIS ONE HOSS TOWN!
JOE, LOOK! THAT RIDER-- HE'S THE GUNSLICK THEY CALL THE EXECUTIONER!
EXECUTIONER? HOW'D HE EARN A HANDLE LIKE THAT?
THE HARD WAY! IF HE DRAWS ON YUH-- YOU'VE HAD IT!

SAY, OLD TIMER, I'M LOOKING FOR A FAST SQUIRT CALLED THE RAWHIDE KID! IS HE AROUND?
YEH! BUT IF'N I WAS YOU, HOMBRE, I'D STEER CLEAR OF THE KID! HE'S GOT A MIGHTY BAD REP!
SO I HEAR! I JUST HOPE HE LIVES UP TO IT!

IT WOULDN'T BE MUCH FUN TO TAKE HIM ON, OTHERWISE!
WAL, IF DYIN' IS YORE IDEA OF FUN, NOW'S YORE CHANCE!
THERE'S THE KID, LEAVIN' THAT SHOP!


KID! RAWHIDE KID! I'M CALLING YOU OUT!
IT'S A NICE DAY, MISTER! TOO NICE FOR BLOODLETTING!
WHOEVER YOU ARE, GO YOUR WAY, AND LET ME GO MINE!
I'M NOT SPOILIN' FOR A SHOOT-OUT!
WELL, I AM, PUNK! AND I DON'T AIM TO BE DENIED!
YOU SURE PUSH HARD, FRIEND...



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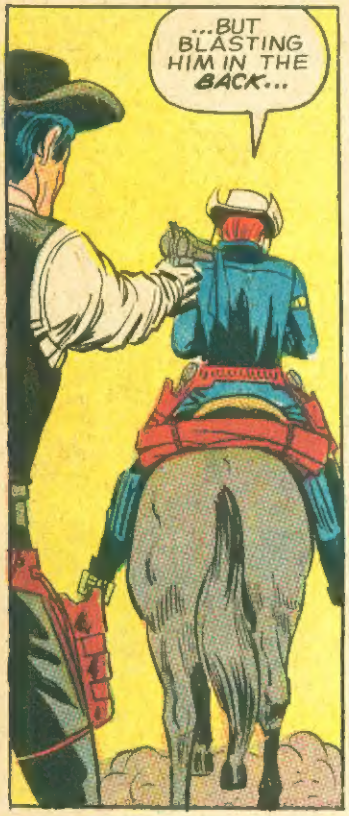
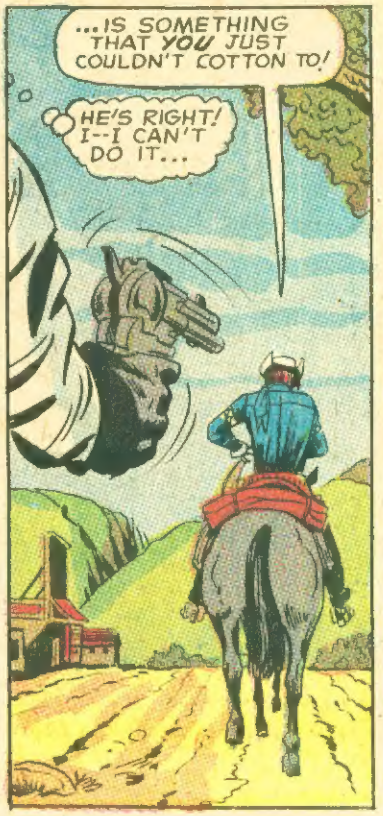
WAIT--COME BACK! YOU CAN'T JUST TURN TAIL! I WON'T LET YOU!
I DON'T RECKON THERE'S ANY WAY FOR YOU TO STOP ME!

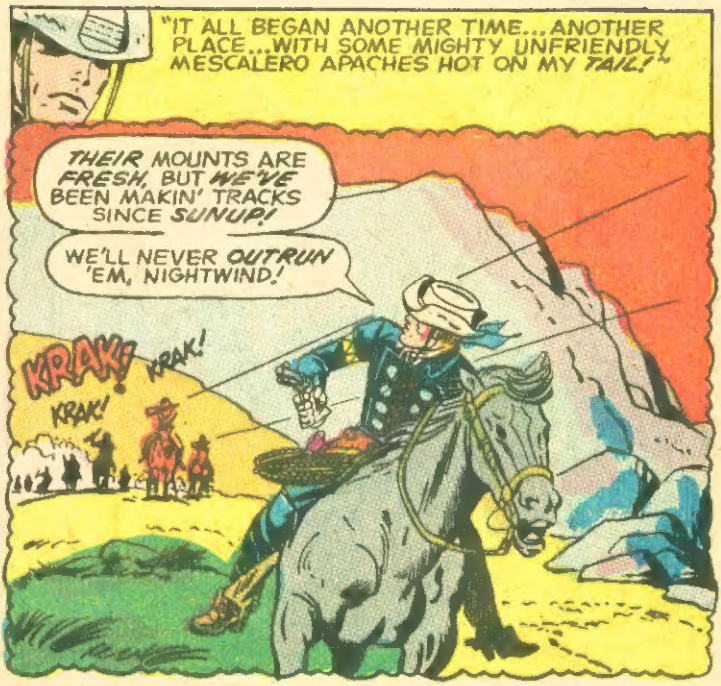
I WARN YOU, KID! I'M NOT LETTING YOU RIDE OFF!
I'LL GUN YOU DOWN IN YOUR TRACKS IF I HAVE TO!
I DOUBT THAT! KILLING A MAN IN A FAIR FIGHT IS ONE THING...


...BUT BLASTING HIM IN THE BACK...


...IS SOMETHING THAT YOU JUST COULDN'T COTTON TO!
HE'S RIGHT! I--I CAN'T DO IT...

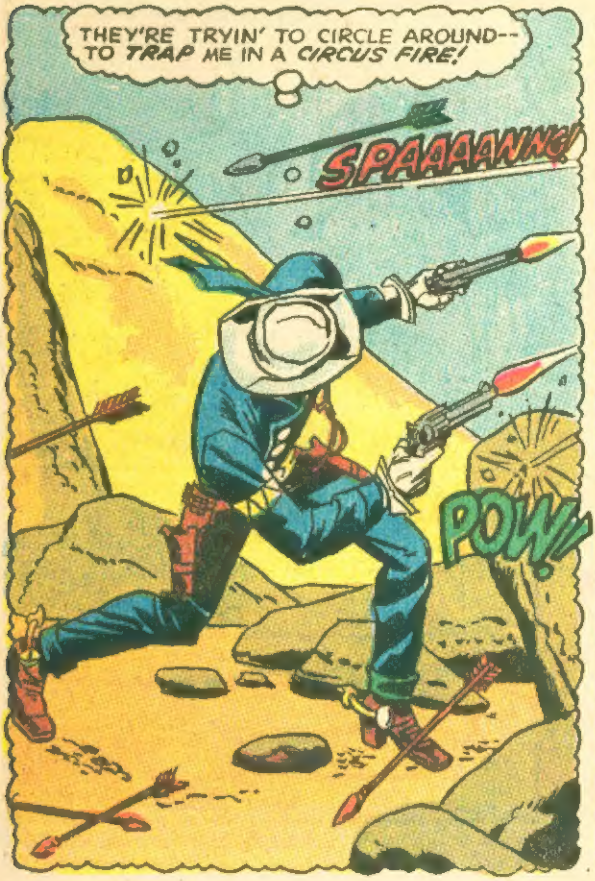
...WHAT IRONY! I CAME ALL THIS DISTANCE TO FIGHT A FAMOUS GUNSLICK...
...NOT KNOWING, NEVER SUSPECTING, THAT IT WOULD TURN OUT TO BE HIM--THE ONE MAN ON THIS EARTH WHO CAN'T FIGHT ME...
...NOT BECAUSE HE FEARS FOR HIS OWN SAFETY, BUT BECAUSE HE FEARS FOR MINE!

AND SO THE KID PUSHES ON, LEAVING BEHIND A TOWN THAT WILL FOREVER SPEAK OF THE DAY THAT THE RAWHIDE KID BACKED DOWN!
THEY THINK I'VE LOST MY NERVE...AND I CAN'T BLAME 'EM! HOW COULD THEY POSSIBLY KNOW THE TRUTH?


"IT ALL BEGAN ANOTHER TIME...ANOTHER PLACE...WITH SOME MIGHTY UNFRIENDLY MESCALERO APACHES HOT ON MY TAIL!"
THEIR MOUNTS ARE FRESH, BUT WE'VE BEEN MAKIN' TRACKS SINCE SUNUP!
WE'LL NEVER OUTRUN 'EM, NIGHTWIND!
KRAK!
KRAK!
KRAK!

ONLY THING TO DO IS TAKE COVER...
KRAK!
KRAK!
KRAK!

...AND MAKE A STAND!
UNNNH...
DEATH TO THE PALE-FACE!
KA-POW!
KA-POW!



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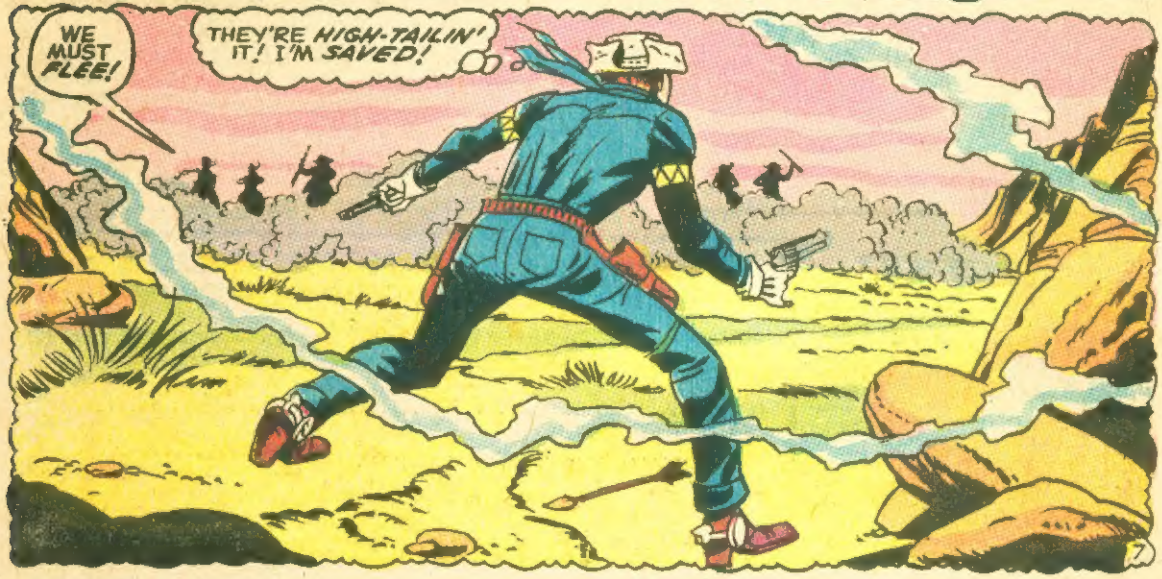
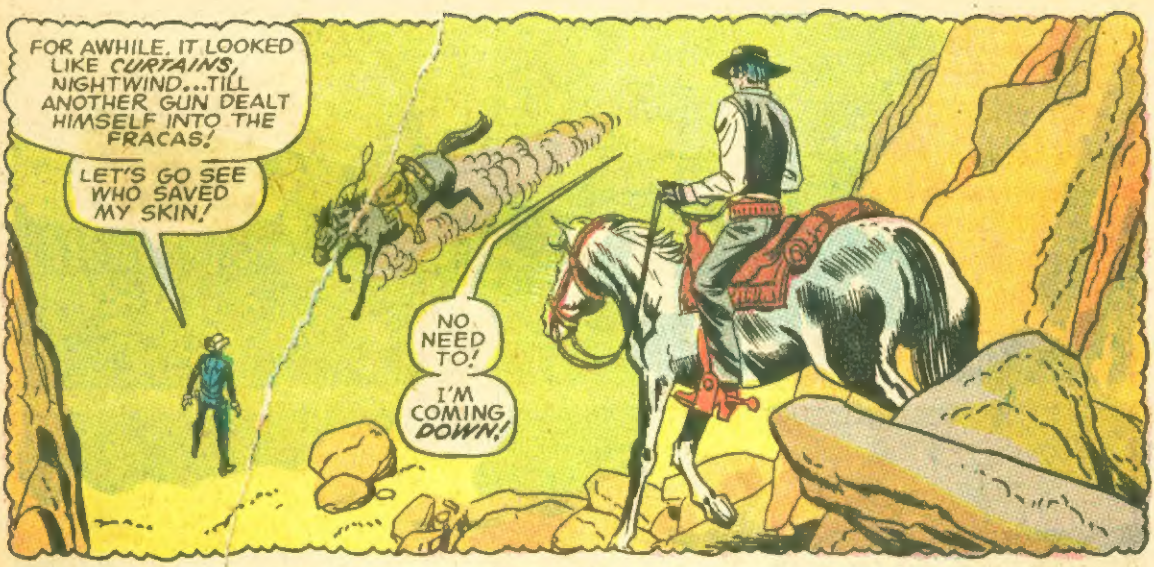
BUT AS THE WAR PARTY GALLOPS IN FOR THE KILL...
THAT HOMBRE WAS DOING MIGHTY FINE BY HIS LONESOME!
KRAK!
...BUT I RECKON THAT RIGHT ABOUT NOW HE CAN USE SOME HELP!

BEHOLD! ANOTHER PALEFACE ON THE ROCKS ABOVE!
HIS EYE IS TRUE! HIS WEAPON, DEADLY!
UNHHH!
FROM UP THERE, HE HOLDS THE ADVANTAGE! WE ARE AT HIS MERCY!


WE MUST FLEE!
THEY'RE HIGH-TAILIN' IT! I'M SAVED!

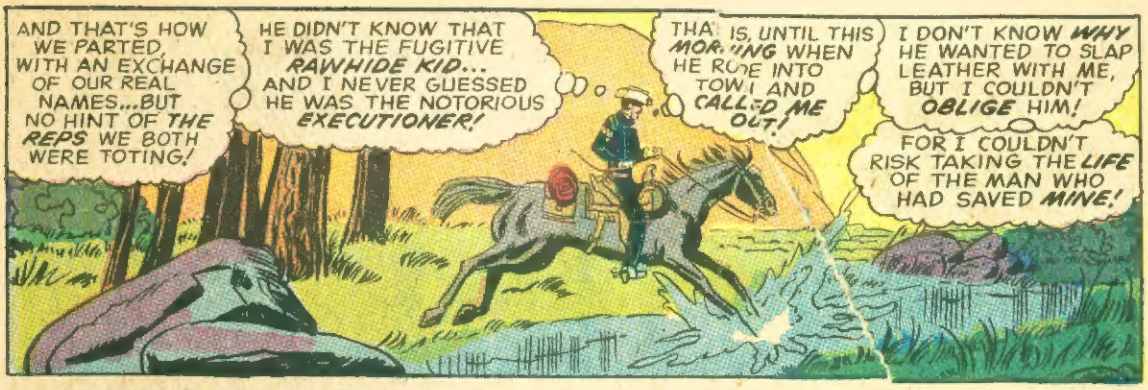

FOR AWHILE, IT LOOKED LIKE CURTAINS, NIGHTWIND...TILL ANOTHER GUN DEALT HIMSELF INTO THE FRACAS!
LET'S GO SEE WHO SAVED MY SKIN!
NO NEED TO!
I'M COMING DOWN!

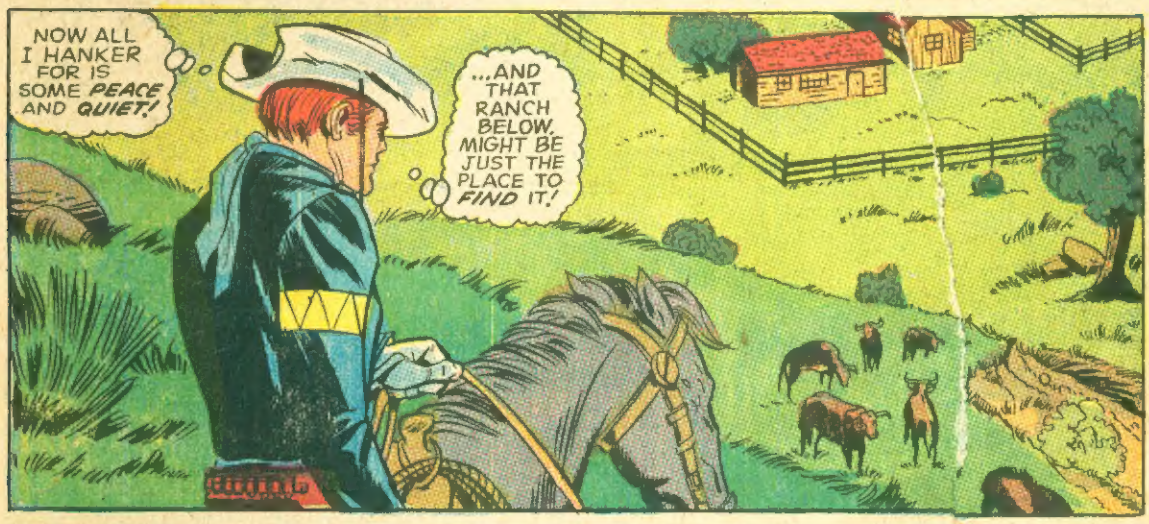
MY NAME'S JOHNNY CLAY...AND I'M SURE BEHOLDEN TO YOU, MISTER!
COLE YORBY IS MY HANDLE...AND SAVING YOUR HIDE, MY PLEASURE!

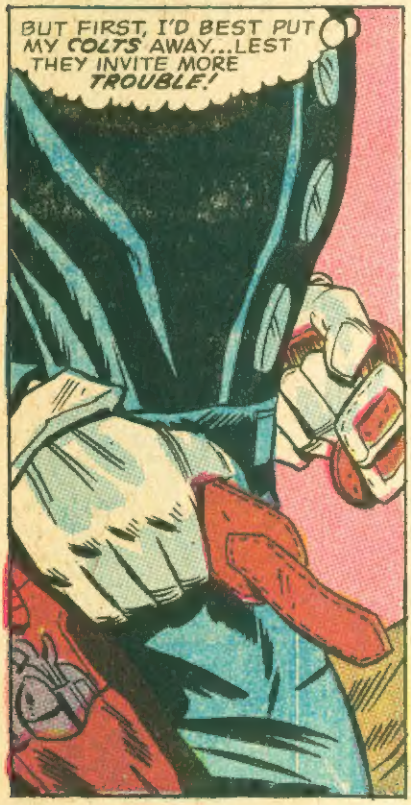
I FIGURE THAT ANY HOMBRE WHO PUT UP THE FIGHT YOU DID AGAINST OVERWHELMING ODDS, DESERVES TO SEE ANOTHER SUNRISE!

THANKS! MAYBE SOME DAY I'LL HAVE A CHANCE TO RETURN THE FAVOR!
WHO CAN TELL? THESE ARE TROUBLED TIMES...AND NO ONE KNOWS WHAT THE MORROW WILL BRING!

ANYWAY, I BOUGHT YOU SOME MORE DAYS SON! USE THEM WELL!
I'LL TRY!
ADIOS, AMIGO!







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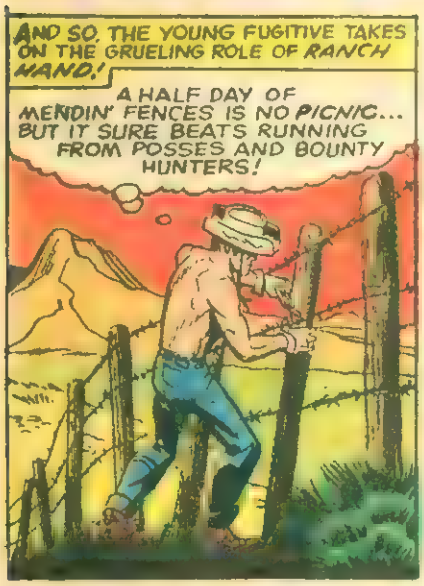
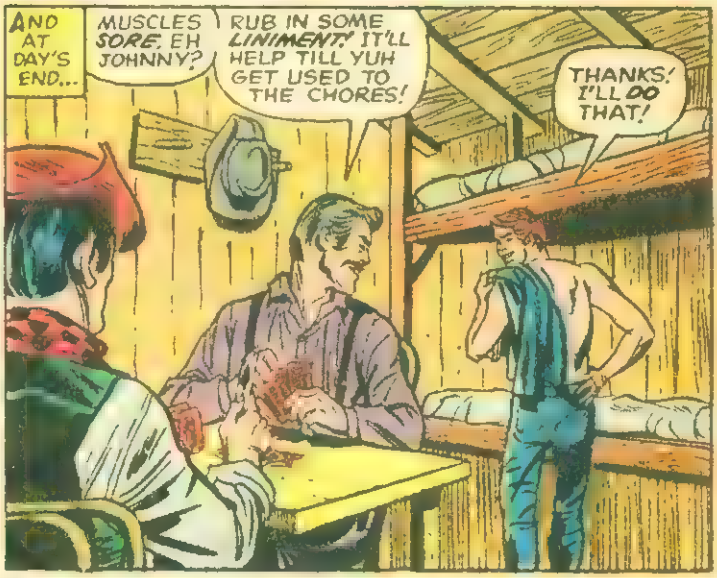
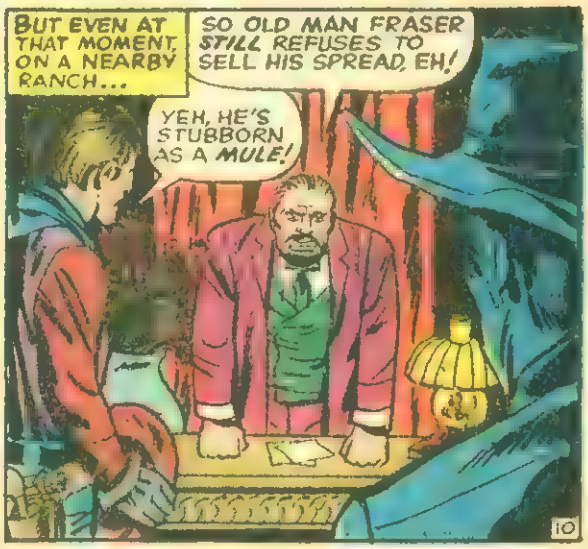
YOU THE RAM-ROD?
YEH! FRANK LOGAN'S THE NAME! WE CAN USE ANOTHER HAND! BUT WRANGLING IS TOUGH WORK, AND YOU DON'T 'PEAR CUT OUT FOR IT, SON!

I CAN PULL MY OWN WEIGHT! LEASTWAYS, I'D LIKE TO TRY!
I RECKON THAT SOUNDS FAIR ENUFF! OKAY, YOU'RE HIRED!
PUT YORE GEAR IN THE BUNK-HOUSE!

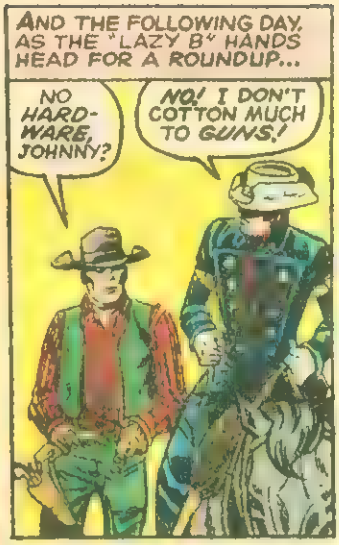

AND SO, THE YOUNG FUGITIVE TAKES ON THE GRUELING ROLE OF RANCH HAND!
A HALF DAY OF MENDIN' FENCES IS NO PICNIC... BUT IT SURE BEATS RUNNING FROM POSSES AND BOUNTY HUNTERS!

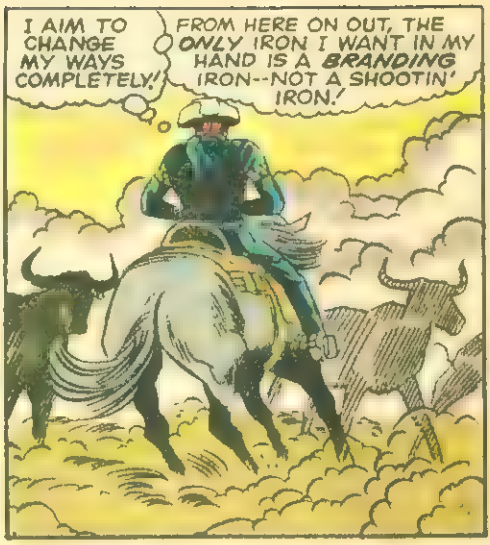

AND AT DAY'S END...
MUSCLES SORE, EH JOHNNY?
RUB IN SOME LINIMENT! IT'LL HELP TILL YUH GET USED TO THE CHORES!
THANKS! I'LL DO THAT!

THESE COWPOKES ARE DECENT, FRIENDLY HOMBRES!
MAYBE I'VE FINALLY FOUND A PLACE WHERE I CAN PLANT ROOTS!


BUT EVEN AT THAT MOMENT, ON A NEARBY RANCH...
SO OLD MAN FRASER STILL REFUSES TO SELL HIS SPREAD, EH!
YEH, HE'S STUBBORN AS A MULE!

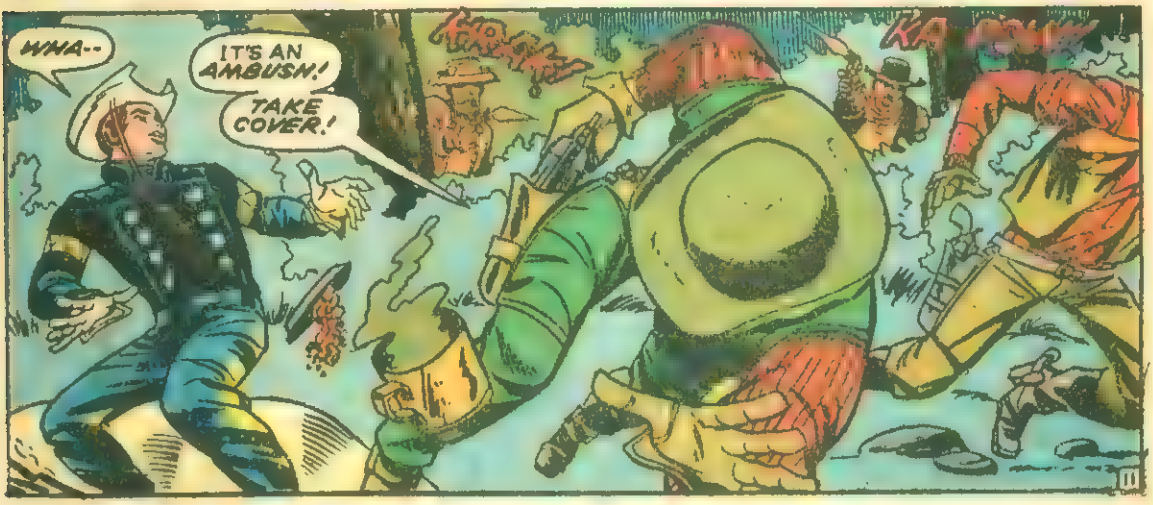
WELL, THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO BUDGE A MULE!
IF WORDS CAN'T DO IT, MAYBE GUN PLAY WILL!


AND THE FOLLOWING DAY, AS THE "LAZY B" HANDS HEAD FOR A ROUNDUP...
NO HARDWARE, JOHNNY?
NO! I DON'T COTTON MUCH TO GUNS!


I AIM TO CHANGE MY WAYS COMPLETELY!
FROM HERE ON OUT, THE ONLY IRON I WANT IN MY HAND IS A BRANDING IRON--NOT A SHOOTIN' IRON!

YOU'RE FAST BECOMING A FIRST RATE COWPUNCHER, JOHNNY!
YEH, YUH WORK HARD, AND LEARN QUICK!
THANKS...

...THAT'S MIGHTY HIGH PRAISE, COMING FROM PROS LIKE YOU!
NOW'S OUR CHANCE! THEY'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT HIT 'EM!


WHA--
IT'S AN AMBUSH!
TAKE COVER!
KA-POW

THEY'RE AMOS CLANTON'S BOYS!
THEY'VE GOT US BOXED IN!
KRAK!
KA-POW!
CLANTON COULDN'T TALK THE BOSS INTO SELLIN' THE RANCH...
KRAK!
...SO NOW HE'S TRYIN' TO DRIVE HIM OFF HIS LAND!

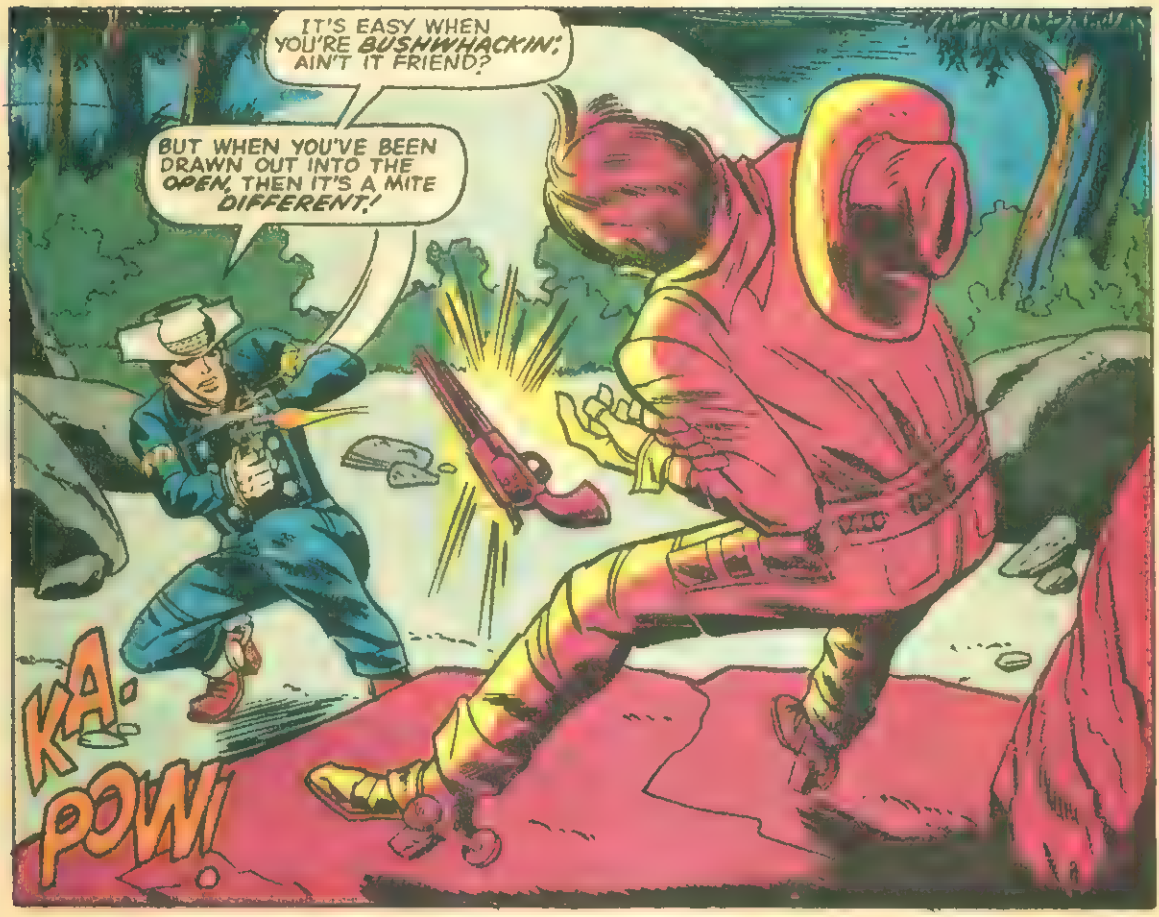
JUST MY BLAMED LUCK! I GIVE UP GUNSLINGIN' TO TURN COWPOKE...
...AND END UP SMACK DAB IN A RANGE WAR!
POW!

UHHH!
THE FOREMAN-- HE'S BEEN WINGED!

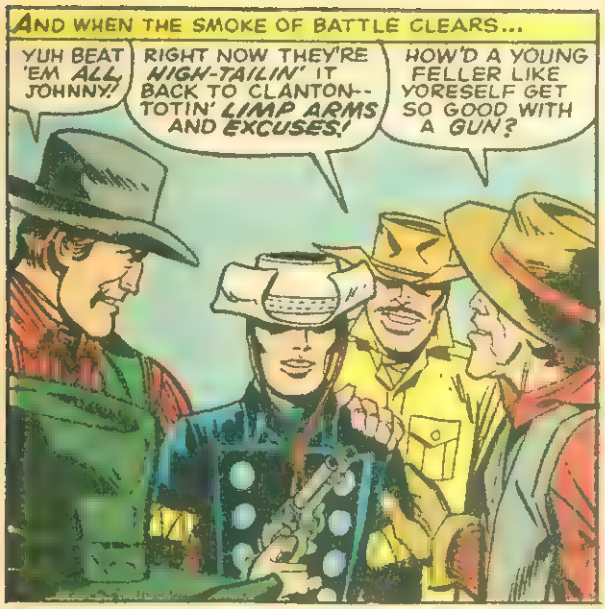
I PROMISED MYSELF NO MORE GUN PLAY! NO MORE BLOODSHED!
BUT WHEN I SIGNED ON WITH THIS OUTFIT, I BOUGHT AN OBLIGATION THAT I CAN'T RUN FROM!
I'M A PART OF THE "LAZY B" RANCH! THESE ARE MY PARDS THAT ARE GETTIN' CUT DOWN!
I MUST HELP 'EM! AND THE ONLY WAY THAT I CAN...

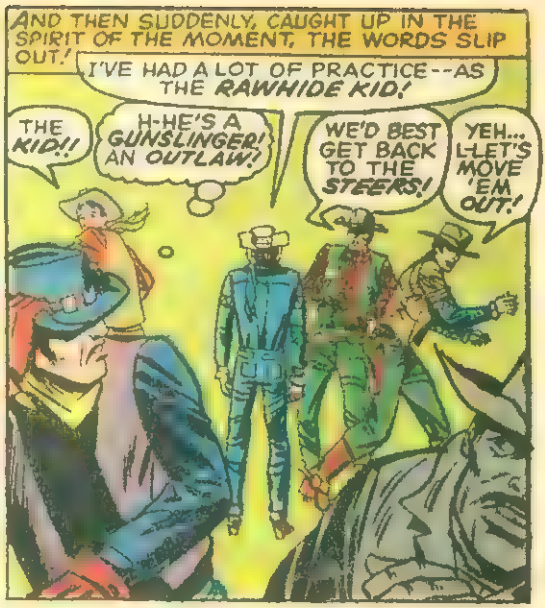
...IS BY GRABBIN' THE GUN THAT LOGAN DROPPED WHEN HE GOT HIT...

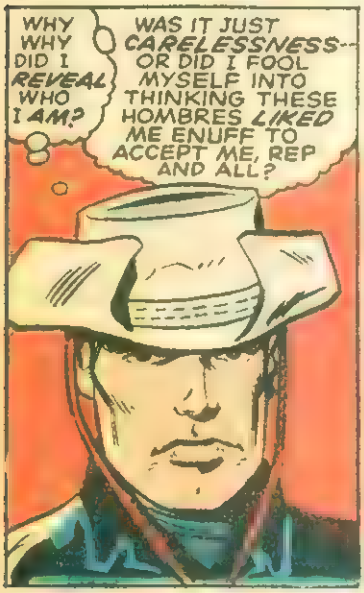
...AND USING IT AS ONLY A GUN HAWK CAN!
KA-POW!

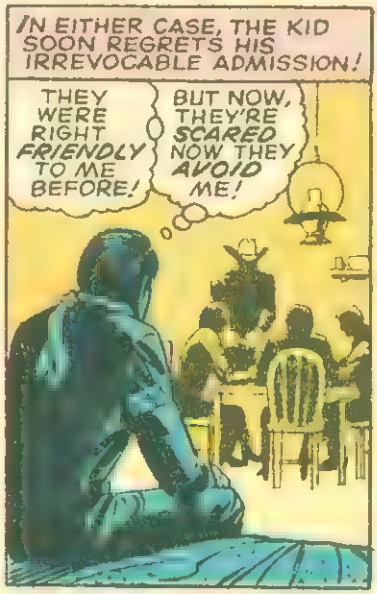

IT'S EASY WHEN YOU'RE BUSHWHACKIN', AIN'T IT FRIEND?
BUT WHEN YOU'VE BEEN DRAWN OUT INTO THE OPEN, THEN IT'S A MITE DIFFERENT!
KA-POW!

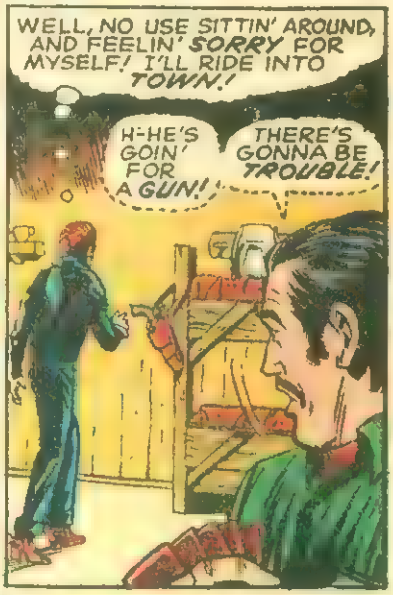
...BECAUSE IT'S OUT HERE, FIGHTING FACE TO FACE, THAT THE MEN GET SEPARATED FROM THE BOYS!
STOP! NO MORE! I GIVE UP!
UNNNHH! -- CLANTON AIN'T PAYIN' ME ENUFF FER THIS!
I-I NEVER SAW SUCH SHOOTIN'!
KA-POW!

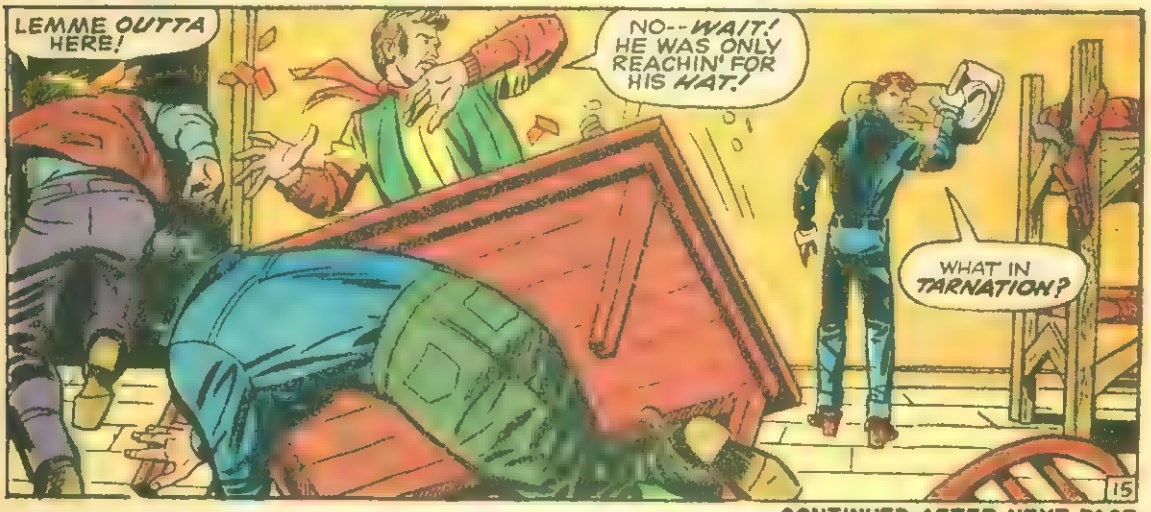












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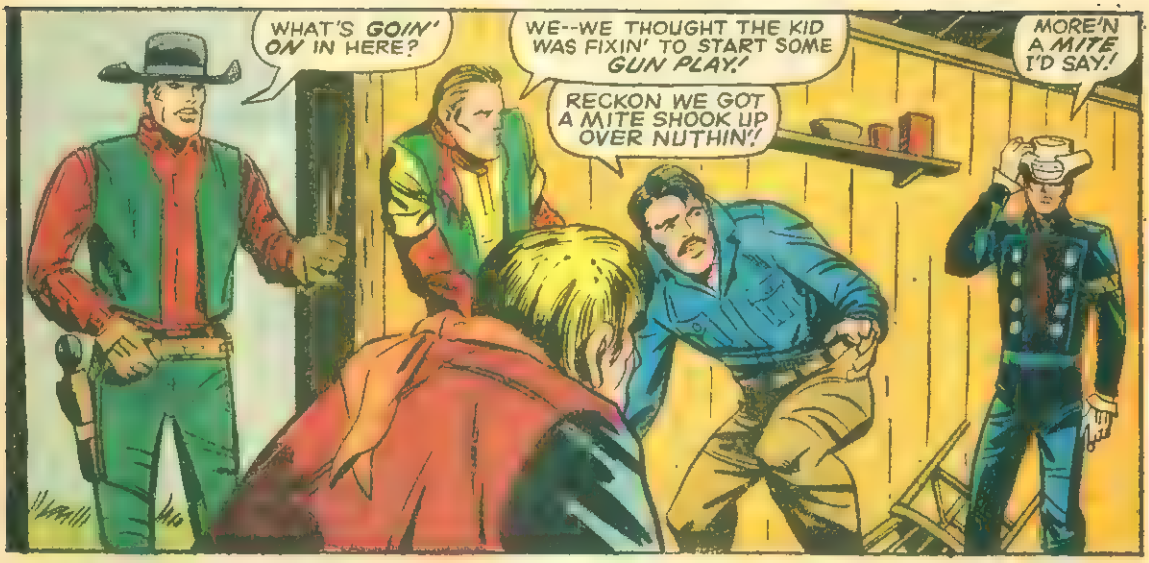
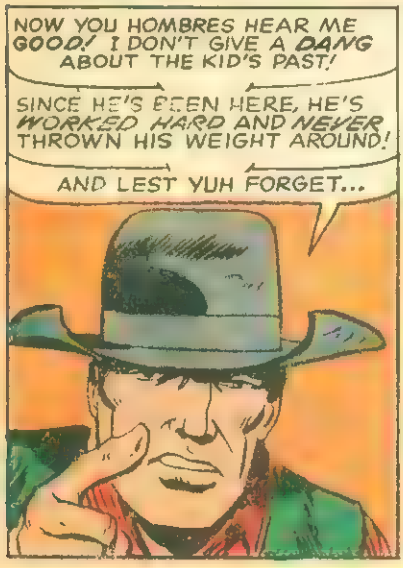
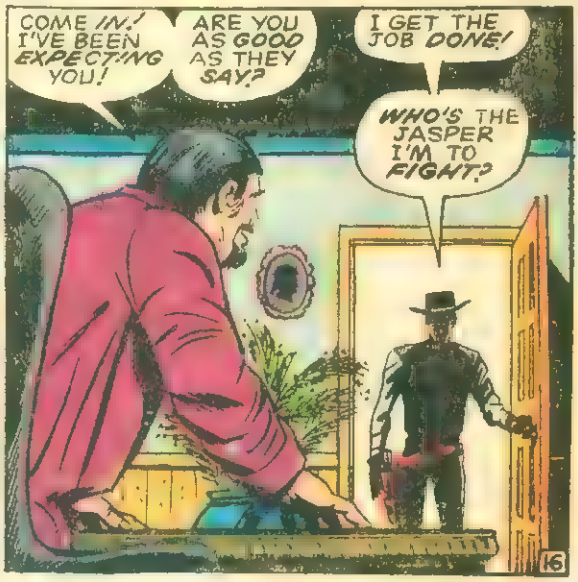

WHAT'S GOIN' ON IN HERE?
WE--WE THOUGHT THE KID WAS FIXIN' TO START SOME GUN PLAY!
RECKON WE GOT A MITE SHOOK UP OVER NUTHIN'!
MORE'N A MITE I'D SAY!


NOW YOU HOMBRES HEAR ME GOOD! I DON'T GIVE A DANG ABOUT THE KID'S PAST!
SINCE HE'S BEEN HERE, HE'S WORKED HARD AND NEVER THROWN HIS WEIGHT AROUND!
AND LEST YUH FORGET...

...THE ONLY TIME HE'S PICKED UP A SHOOTIN' IRON, IT WAS FOR THE PURPOSE OF SAVIN' OUR NECKS!
IN MY BOOK, THAT MEANS THE KID HAS EARNED OUR GRATITUDE AND OUR FRIENDSHIP!
WILL YUH ACCEPT MUH APOLOGY, KID?
OF COURSE, MATT!
RECKON I I OWE YUH MUH REGRETS, TOO, KID!
YORE RIGHT, FRANK! WE'VE BEEN ACTIN' LIKE SPINELESS FOOLS!
YEH! SAME HERE!

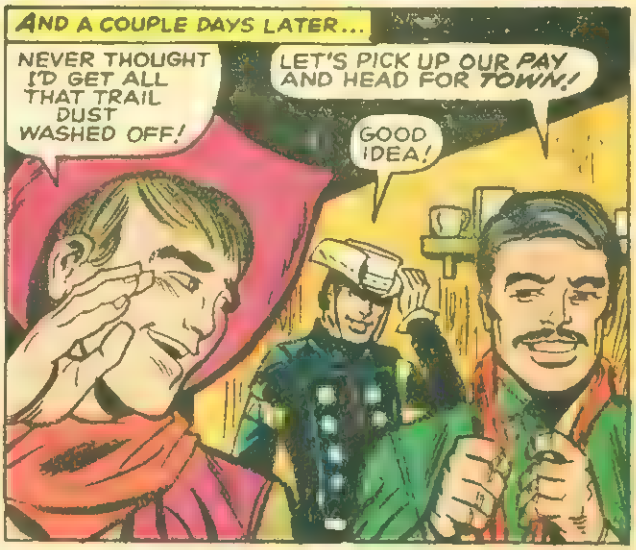
BUT THE KID'S TROUBLES ARE FAR FROM OVER...
SO OLD MAN FRASER HAS HIRED A FAST GUN, EH?!
WELL, TWO CAN PLAY THAT KIND OF GAME!
KNOCK!
KNOCK!


COME IN! I'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU!
ARE YOU AS GOOD AS THEY SAY?
I GET THE JOB DONE!
WHO'S THE JASPER I'M TO FIGHT?

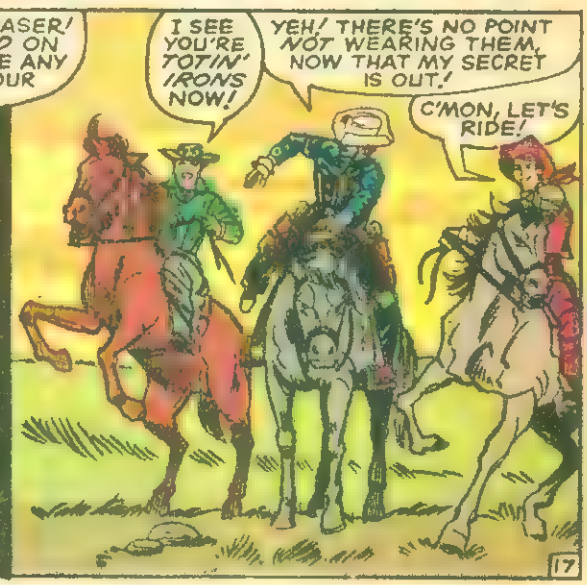
YOU'RE GOING UP AGAINST THE RAWHIDE KID!
THE KID?!! SORRY, NO DEAL!
WHY? CAN'T YOU TAKE HIM?
IT'S NOT THAT! HE WON'T FIGHT ME! I CALLED HIM OUT ONCE, BUT HE WOULDN'T SLAP LEATHER!

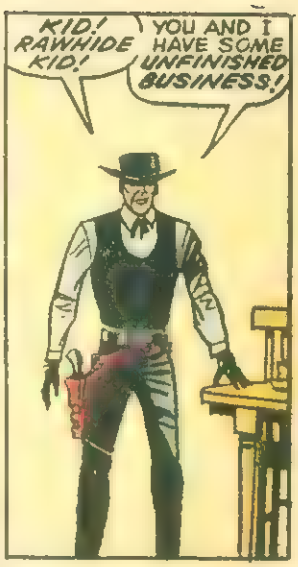
BAH! THERE ARE WAYS OF MAKING A MAN FIGHT!
GOAD HIM! TAUNT HIM! EVERYONE HAS HIS BREAKING POINT!
I DON'T KNOW...

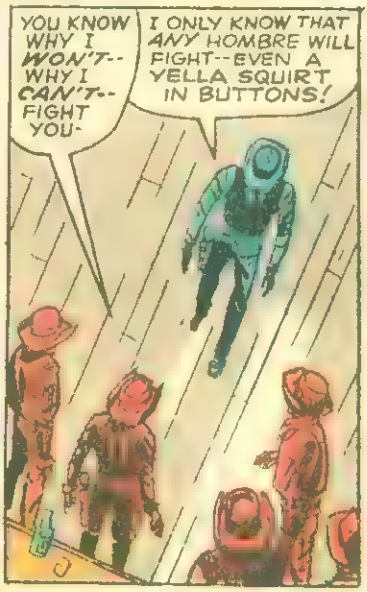
LOOK, I'M WILLING TO UP THE PRICE! TWO THOUSAND IF YOU PULL IT OFF!
OKAY, I'LL TRY--BUT FOR A REASON OTHER THAN MONEY!
SOMETHING PERSONAL?
YEH, VERY!

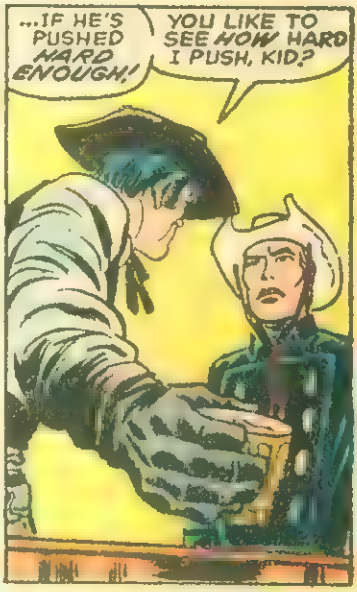

AND A COUPLE DAYS LATER...
NEVER THOUGHT I'D GET ALL THAT TRAIL DUST WASHED OFF!
LET'S PICK UP OUR PAY AND HEAD FOR TOWN!
GOOD IDEA!

I'M WORRIED! IT'S NOT LIKE AMOS CLANTON TO GIVE UP SO EASY!
DON'T FRET, MISTUH FRASER! WITH THE RAWHIDE KID ON OUR SIDE, WE'LL HANDLE ANY TROUBLE THAT COMES OUR WAY!


I SEE YOU'RE TOTIN' IRONS NOW!
YEH! THERE'S NO POINT NOT WEARING THEM, NOW THAT MY SECRET IS OUT!
C'MON, LET'S RIDE!







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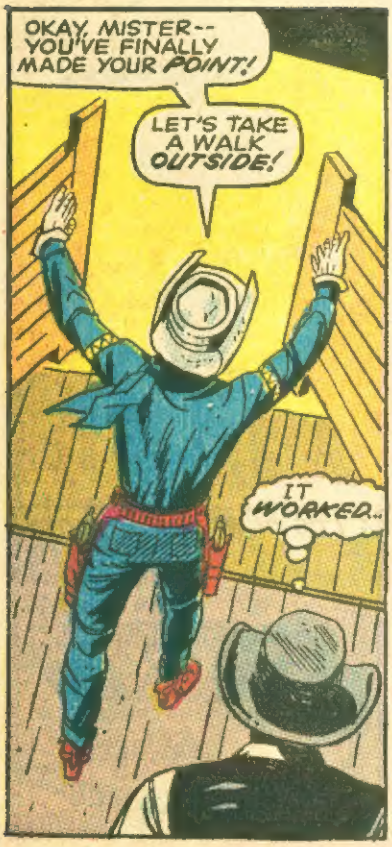
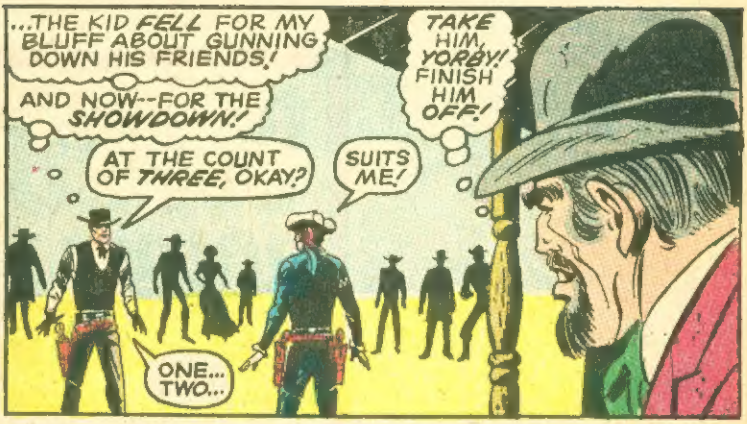
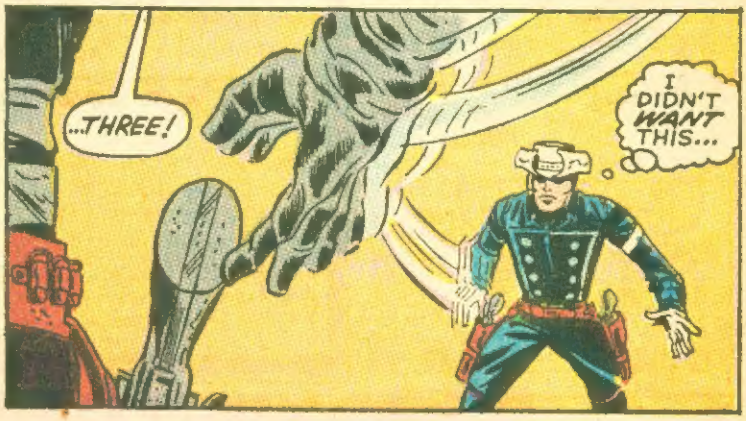
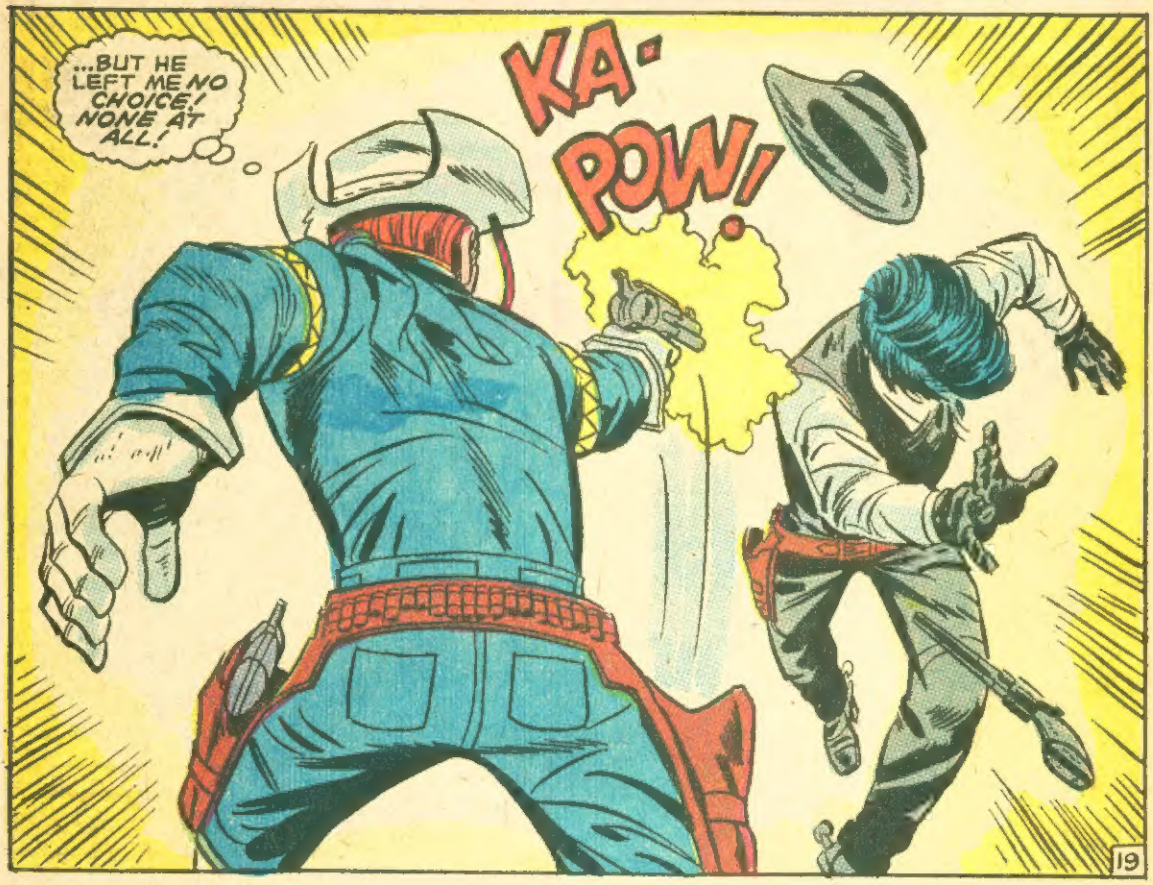
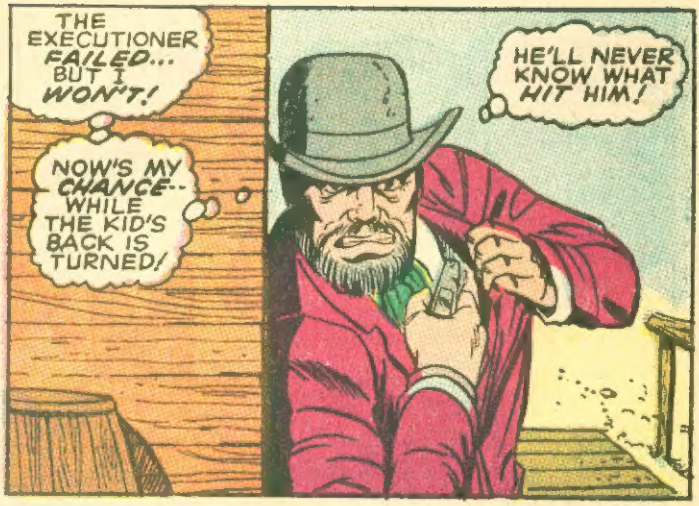

OKAY, MISTER--YOU'VE FINALLY MADE YOUR POINT!
LET'S TAKE A WALK OUTSIDE!
IT WORKED...

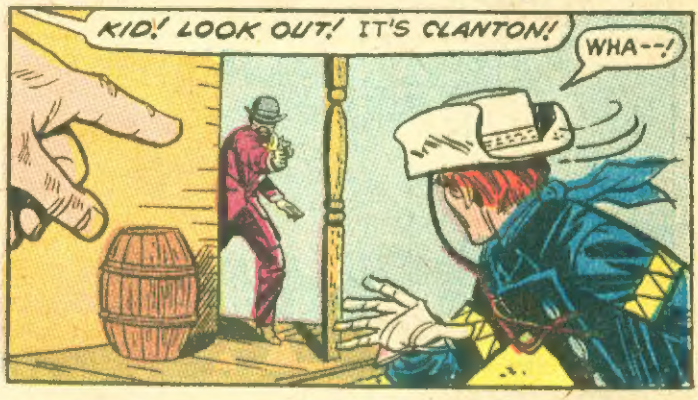

...THE KID FELL FOR MY BLUFF ABOUT GUNNING DOWN HIS FRIENDS!
AND NOW--FOR THE SHOWDOWN!
AT THE COUNT OF THREE, OKAY?
ONE... TWO...
SUITS ME!
TAKE HIM, YORBY! FINISH HIM OFF!

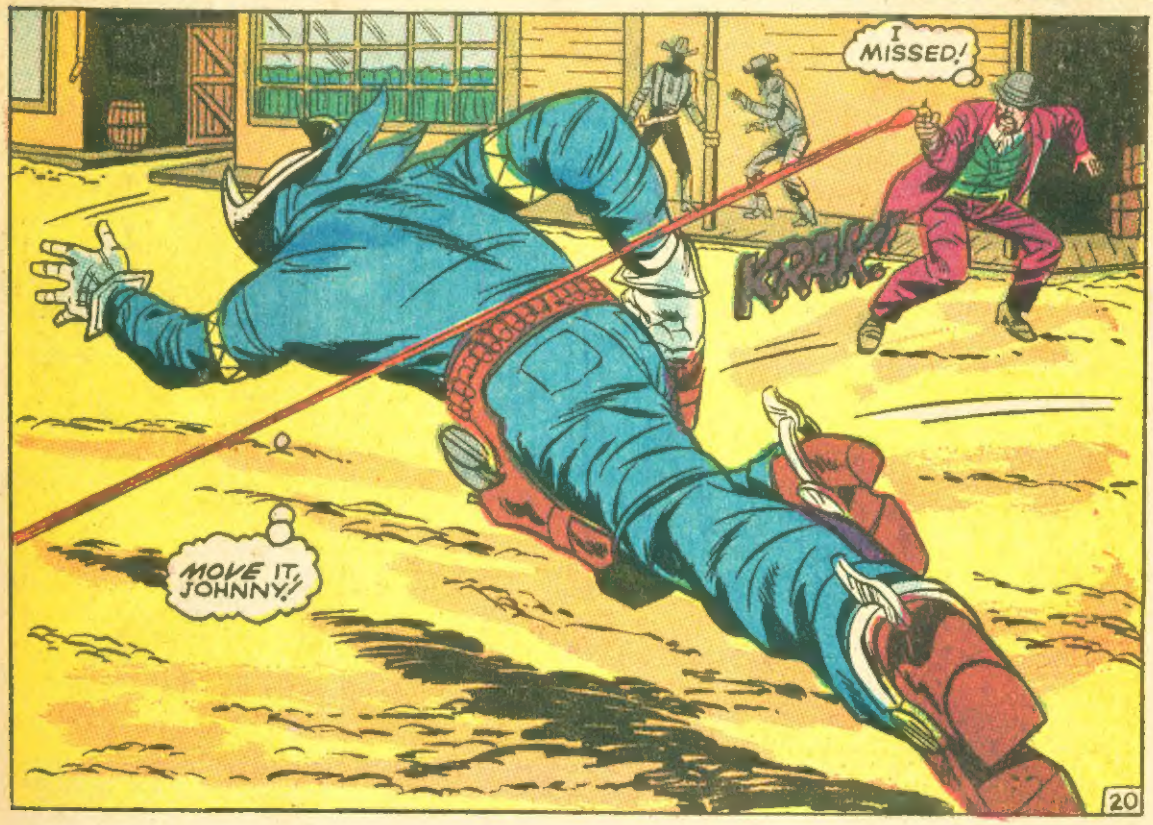

...THREE!
I DIDN'T WANT THIS...

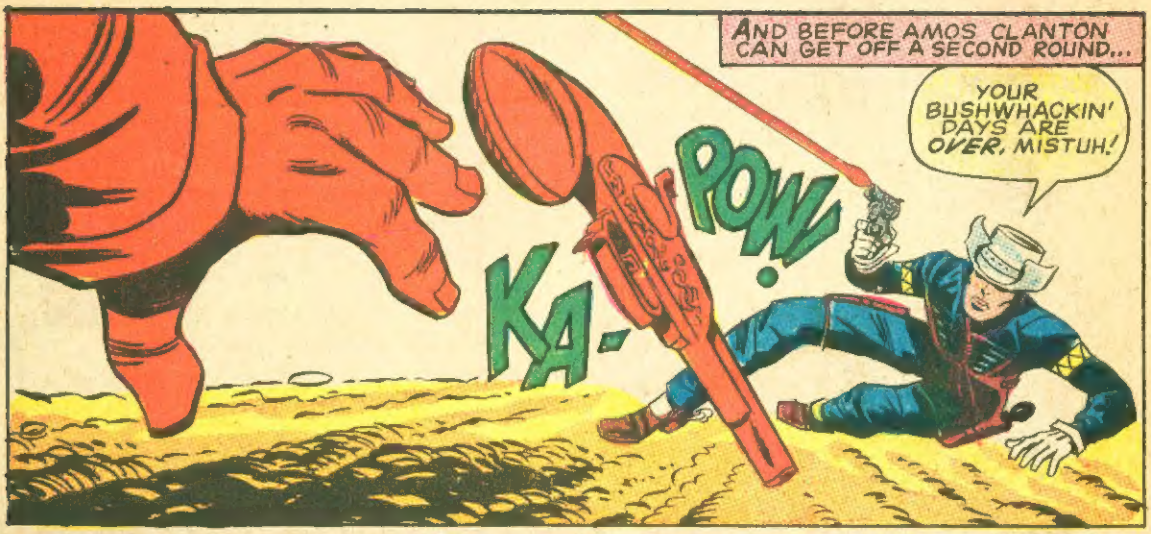

...BUT HE LEFT ME NO CHOICE! NONE AT ALL!
KA-POW!

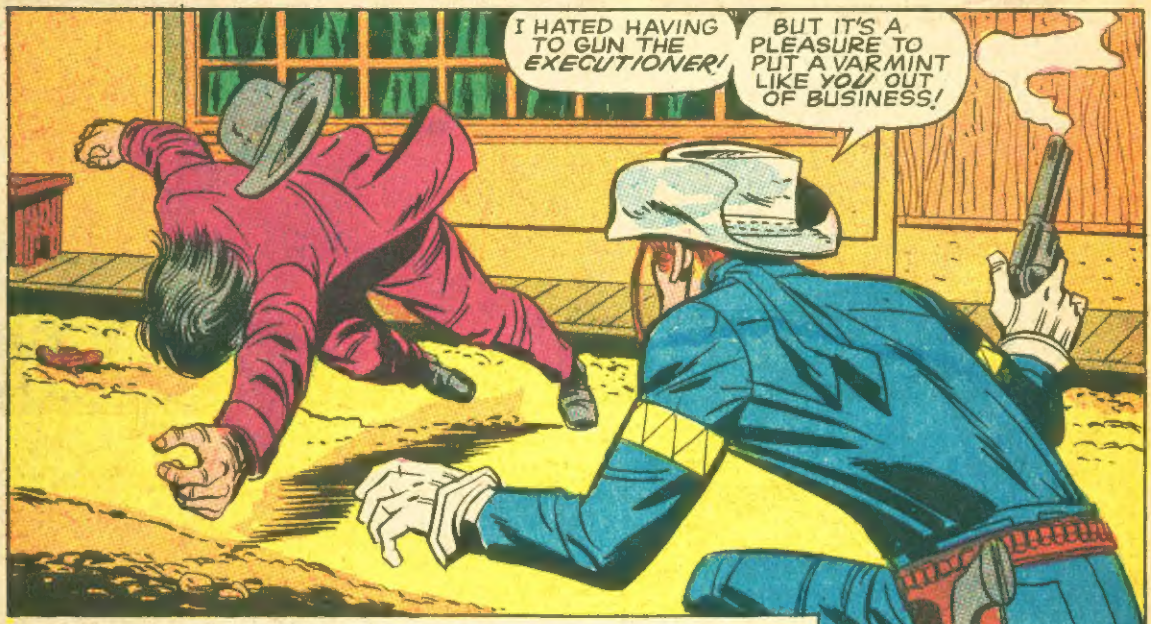
THERE, HARDHEAD-- YOU FINALLY GOT THE GUN PLAY YOU WERE HANKERIN' FOR!
WAIT-- HE'S MOVING! HE'S STILL ALIVE!
BUT WHAT DID IT BUY YOU... 'CEPT A ONE-WAY TICKET FROM THIS EARTH?


THE EXECUTIONER FAILED... BUT I WON'T!
NOW'S MY CHANCE-- WHILE THE KID'S BACK IS TURNED!
HE'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT HIT HIM!


KID! LOOK OUT! IT'S CLANTON!
WHA--!


I MISSED!
KRAK!
MOVE IT, JOHNNY!





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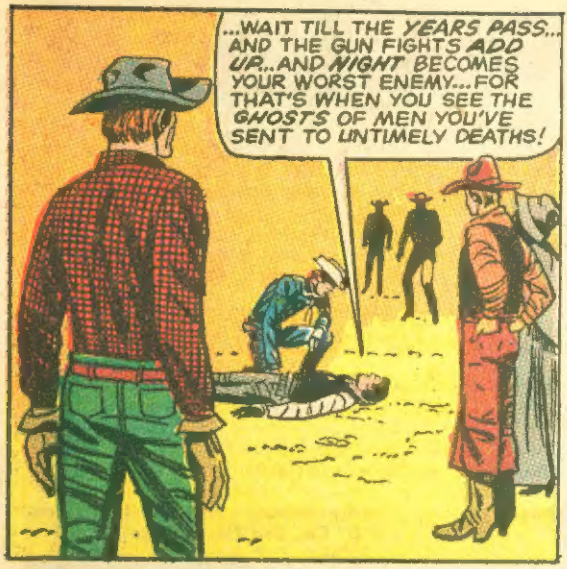
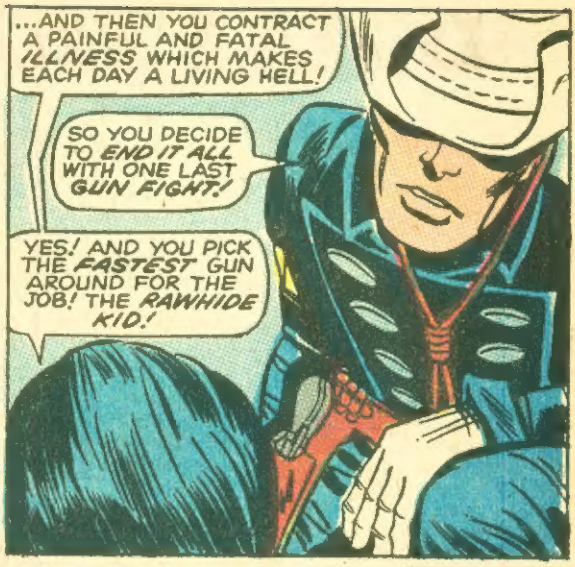

...WAIT TILL THE YEARS PASS... AND THE GUN FIGHTS ADD UP...AND NIGHT BECOMES YOUR WORST ENEMY...FOR THAT'S WHEN YOU SEE THE GHOSTS OF MEN YOU'VE SENT TO UNTIMELY DEATHS!


...AND THEN YOU CONTRACT A PAINFUL AND FATAL ILLNESS WHICH MAKES EACH DAY A LIVING HELL!
SO YOU DECIDE TO END IT ALL WITH ONE LAST GUN FIGHT!
YES! AND YOU PICK THE FASTEST GUN AROUND FOR THE JOB! THE RAWHIDE KID!

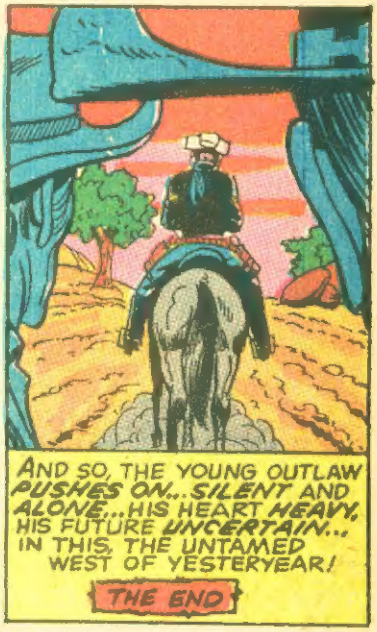
SO YOU SEE, KID, YOU'VE REPAID A DEBT!
I SAVED YOUR LIFE, AND IN RETURN...

...YOU'VE GIVEN ME THE ONE THING I WANTED MOST...

...AN END TO MINE...

HE'S GONE HIS ROAD WAS LONG AND AGONIZING, BUT NOW AT LAST HE'S AT REST!
IS THIS HOW IT ENDS FOR ALL GUN HAWKS?
AS I LOOK AT HIM TODAY... AM I SEEING MYSELF TOMORROW?

IT'S ALL OVER! MIGHT AS WELL HEAD BACK TO THE RANCH!
I'M NOT GOING WITH YOU!
WHY NOT, KID?
WHAT HAPPENED TODAY IS A MEMORY THAT I WANT TO PUT BEHIND ME! FAR, FAR BEHIND ME!


AND SO, THE YOUNG OUTLAW PUSHES ON...SILENT AND ALONE...HIS HEART HEAVY, HIS FUTURE UNCERTAIN... IN THIS, THE UNTAMED WEST OF YESTERYEAR!
THE END